

WASHINGTON, DC- Working to protect the safety and security of our children, Congresswoman Linda T. Sánchez (CA-39) today announced that she has secured funding for the South Gate School Resource Officer Program. Sánchez had the project included in the Science, State, Justice and Commerce Fiscal Year 2006 Appropriations bill which was approved by the Appropriations Committee today. The exact funding level for the program will be determined when the bill proceeds to a final negotiation session between the U.S. House and Senate.

“School Resource Officers are specially trained community police officers who work with students and faculty to develop crime prevention strategies, train students in conflict resolution, and provide early intervention to prevent drug and gang problems,” said Congresswoman Sánchez.

The School Resource Officers Program (SROs) provides uniformed police officers in area high schools to serve as liaisons between community youths and the police department. They have a proven track record of success in other cities near South Gate.

With the forces of rapid population growth and expansion of the public school system, gangs are a rising epidemic in the South Gate community, resulting in tension on school campuses and resulting in an increase in violence, crime and other delinquent activity.

“I am delighted to have received a funding commitment for this program which will help improve public safety and education in South Gate. Having police officers available as resources in public schools affords our children and our communities an opportunity to avoid trouble before it begins. School Resource Officers provide security, but they also do much more by helping students, teachers and administrators identify risks and prevent dangerous situations,” added Congresswoman Sánchez.

In a meeting with Congresswoman Sánchez earlier this year, South Gate City leaders made the SRO program a top priority request for federal assistance.

“The School Resource Officer program is vital to our efforts to ensure the safety of our youth in South Gate, who are the future of our community. SRO’s have been shown to be highly effective in positively impacting attendance and creating safer campuses. The city looks forward to working with the school district in this partnership and we are very grateful to Congresswoman Sánchez’ hard work to secure our funding,” said South Gate Mayor Greg Martinez.

Congresswoman Sánchez will continue to work hard to see that the maximum funding level possible for the SRO program is maintained as it continues through the appropriations process.

“Putting these police officers in the schools will not only keep our kids safe, but also will contribute to a more secure learning environment, which is absolutely essential if we want our students to realize their academic potential,” concluded Sánchez.

The requested funds will be used to pay for the salary, equipment and administrative costs for this valuable youth crime prevention program. The SRO program is a partnership between the City of South Gate and the South Gate Police Activity League (PAL).